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## *Politician at CIA?*

George Bush has compiled an impressive record as a congressman from Texas, Richard M. Nixon's ambassador to the United Nations, President Gerald R. Ford's envoy in Peking, and as former chairman of the Republican National Committee.

He has been a decent and loyal Republican working tirelessly for his party and country.

Is he qualified to head the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)? President Ford obviously believes the answer is "yes," because he has nominated Mr. Bush to fill that extremely sensitive position.

If confirmed by the Senate, Mr. Bush would be the first politician to make the jump into leadership of the agency whose purpose is to keep an eye on friend and foe alike.

The CIA — already accused of yielding to political pressures in the past — desperately needs a new image to regain prestige and the confidence of the American people.

Senator Frank Church of Idaho has pledged to oppose confirmation of Mr. Bush. The man who has led the Senate investigation of CIA activities is not motivated by vindictiveness. Mr. Church insists a professional from the intelli-

gence community without ties to powerful political forces is needed for the job.

The Watergate Special Prosecutor's office summed up its experiences last month with recommendations which closely parallel the thinking of Mr. Church. It advised that the worlds of law enforcement and intelligence gathering be totally separate from partisan politics. This advice should be beyond dispute.

Mr. Bush has been placed in an embarrassing position. His close relationship with President Ford and the Republican cause invites questions, valid or not, of his ability to remain impartial at CIA.

This is precisely the point raised by Mr. Church and many others, including Connecticut's Senator Abraham Ribicoff.

It would be most unfortunate if Mr. Bush was personally damaged in Senate hearings by intimations of what he might do in the future.

Right now, Mr. Bush is popular and respected, as was his father, Senator Prescott Bush. But Mr. Bush is the potential victim of an unwise decision by Mr. Ford. A graceful announcement withdrawing his name from consideration might be in the best interest of Mr. Bush and the nation.